17th December 1947]

MR. PRESIDENT :—" Suppose the Government move for postponement, will the hon. Member agree? "

K. UPPI SAHIB BAHADUR :—" May I, with your permission, move an amendment to the resolution that it be postponed? "

SRI C. N. MUTHURANGA MUDALIYAR :—" On a point of order. Any non-official member is entitled to bring in a similar resolution, and why should the question of postponement come in here at all? "

MR. PRESIDENT :—" It is for hon. Members to decide. I have nothing to do with the matter."

K. UPPI SAHIB BAHADUR :—" By way of amendment I move that the resolution be postponed."

SRI B. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU :—" I second it."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" I am afraid the amendment is out of order, because there is nothing before the House to postpone. The question of passing on to the next item in the order paper is entirely different from the question of postponement. If the House is seized of any business, then the question of postponement arises. The motion before the House is that the House do pass to the business next in order in the list of business. So I rule the amendment out of order."

The motion was put and carried.

B.—RESOLUTIONS—*cont.*

(2) APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE TO GO INTO THE SUPPLY OF ELECTRICITY FOR AGRICULTURAL AND IRRIGATIONAL PURPOSES.

SRI B. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU :—" I move—

'*This Council recommends to the Government that a Committee of M.L.As. and M.L.Cs. be constituted*

(*a*) *to examine the various applications in all the districts for grant of electric connections to wells and other reservoirs for purposes of irrigation;*

(*b*) *to take stock of all the materials available for facilitating the grant of such extensions and new connections for purposes of irrigation;*

(*c*) *to consider the desirability of stopping the supply of electricity for purposes other than agriculture in order to expedite the Grow More Food campaign; and*

(*d*) *to suggest ways and means to see that the existing and potential demand for electricity for agricultural purposes is met as early as possible, and not exceeding six months in the case of existing demands.*'

" We have been discussing an All-India question previously, and it may look as though it is coming from the sublime to the

ridiculous. Whether it is coming from the sublime to the ridiculous or not, I can say that it is certainly coming into grips with the real facts that concern us. The whole question of electricity is a very old thing so far as this province is concerned. I move this resolution deliberately and for more reasons than one. When this Ministry was formed, I met the Hon. Premier and the Hon. Dr. Rajan only for discussing with regard to electricity. Now that the Hon. Premier is sitting here, I would like to make a personal reference. He has been engaged in disposing of files, and I am sure hereafter at least he will, just as the Collectors do, throw the files overboard, as there ought to be a certain proportion. When I met the Hon. Premier, he told me that when he was a Member and not a Premier, he went to several offices with regard to electric connections which he could not secure. Therefore the need for electric connections is as intimate to him as to me. Then I went to Dr. Rajan, who has got electric supply for his agricultural farm. That was six months ago. The need for electricity for agricultural purposes is well known to the Hon. Premier and the Hon. Minister for Food for a very long time. Now the question arises as to what it is that prevents this Government from giving electricity for agricultural purposes. In this connection, I may tell you that I gave notice of the following question on 14th August 1947 :—

' Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state—

(*a*) the names of villages talukwar in the several districts in which new wells have been dug under the subsidy scheme of the Government for digging new wells;

(*b*) the number of new wells dug in each such village;

(*c*) which of the said villages are to-day actually connected with any electricity supply scheme and the name of such scheme; which of the said villages can be connected with any existing electricity supply scheme;

(*d*) whether any and, if so, which villages applied for such connection;

(*e*) what steps the Government and the Electricity Department have taken to extend the supply of electricity to villages for irrigating wells; and

(*f*) what difficulty, if any, the Government have to encounter to extend the supply of electricity owing to (i) load capacity, (ii) want of material to give extensions such as poles, transformers, etc.? '

3 p.m. " This is the question, Sir, which I put to the Government on 14th August 1947 and to-day is 17th December 1947, that is to say, about four months have passed since then and no answer has been given so far. That is question No. 1.

"Then, Sir, I asked another question on 1st August 1947. The question was with regard to the supply of oil engines to ryots for the purpose of irrigation in the years 1945–46 and 1946–47. The following were the two important sub-clauses in that question :—

'(i) What steps the Government have taken to ascertain the number of oil engines needed in every district for irrigation and to supply the same on sale to ryots;

(ii) What steps the Government have taken to supply the ryots with pumping sets and other materials needed to fit up a well with engine, electrical or oil;'

Again on 6th October 1947, I asked the following question :—

'(i) What are the rules and regulations, if any, of the Provincial Government, or the Government of India, to regulate the import of oil engines, their disposal and the price thereof; and

(ii) Whether the Government of Madras have any powers over the importing firms of oil engines in the Madras Presidency to make them intimate to the Government the receipt together with the number, make and horsepower of oil engines when imported by individuals or firms or companies; etc.'

"Then again on the same day, that is, 6th October 1947, I put the following question also :—

'(i) Whether there was a memorandum, dated 2nd April 1947 or thereabout submitted to the Minister for Public Works in connection with the provision for and extension of electricity from Mirjapuram to Katapalli, Katremipad and Gopavaram villages and Mirjapuram to Kattarepalli, Billarapalli and Madicherla villages;

(ii) and if so, whether any steps have been taken in regard to the same, if not, why not; and

(iii) whether any report was called for from the departmental officer concerned and whether it will be laid on the table of the House?'

"Therefore, Sir, from August 1947 to this day, that is four months ago, I wanted to know how many applications for supply of oil engines and electrical connections to ryots for irrigation purposes have been received and what steps have the Government taken to supply electricity to them. Now this resolution is moved by me in order merely to point out that the Hon. Minister has not got all these imformation and it is the duty of the Government to have called for them and to know for themselves what the position in the villages is, with regard to the supply of electricity. The information as to the number of applications received in each district for the supply of electric connections to wells and other irrigation sources should have been made available to me by the Chief Engineer for Electricity between August and December and

it appears that no action has been taken on these questions. It is well-known that electricity is a great necessity for villagers to carry through the Grow More Food campaign, and without that their agricultural operations will suffer. That is why, Sir, I ask that a Committee of M.L.As. and M.L.Cs. be constituted to examine the various applications in all the districts for grant of electric connections to wells and other reservoirs for purposes of irrigation and to take stock of all the materials available for facilitating the grant of such extensions and new connections for purposes of irrigation, etc. But it seems that the Electricity Department cannot move in this matter and the Government are probably unable to make it move. The Electricity Department is the tail. The tail does not move and the head seems to have no control over the tail. That is the position, Sir. Therefore, I say that it is very disappointing to me that this tail moves, not according to what the head wants, but according to its own wishes.

"There is another point that I wish to mention, Sir. Recently when the supplementary budget came up before this House, I raised this very point, namely, the supply of electricity in rural areas. In the Explanatory Note under "Capital Outlay on Electricity Schemes", it was stated that the Chief Engineer (Electricity) reported on the 26th August 1947 that the consumption of service cables for the system was about 2,500 yards per month, that the Madras Electric Supply Corporation had already placed indents for about 5,000 yards which were expected from Calcutta and Bombay and that about 25,000 yards more were required to meet the requirements for the next twelve months, and that he authorized the Madras Electric Supply Corporation to purchase an additional 5,000 yards of cables which were available with Messrs. Easum Engineering Company at a cost of Rs. 38,340, and that out of the balance of 20,000 yards of cables still required, he had placed orders for 3,700 yards of cables of 3 core 0·04 square inch PILC at Rs. 5,140 per 1,000 yards which were immediately available with Messrs. Crompton Engineering Company. He has also requested the ratification of the Government to the action taken by him.'

"That is to say, that the State can move so far as the supply of electricity to the Madras City is concerned, but not for the supply of electricity to rural areas.

"Then the Explanatory Note goes on to say, 'That he also requested the sanction of the Government to the purchase separately of 10,000 yards of cables of 3 core 0·0225 square inch 660 V. PILC at Rs. 3,610 per 1,000 yards from the British Insulated Callenders Cables, Ltd. As it was reported that the stock of cables in the system would last only for two or three weeks and as the cables which were immediately available with the firms

should not be lost to the Government on account of any delay in placing orders, the proposals of the Chief Engineer (Electricity) were treated as extremely urgent and sanctioned."

"Well, Sir, in the above case the Chief Engineer for Electricity has authorized the Madras Electric Supply Corporation to purchase an additional 5,000 yards of cables and he has come forward for the ratification of his action and now he has proposed for the purchase of more cables which are being treated as extremely urgent and orders are being placed for their purchase. These it must be noted, are only with regard to the City of Madras. My submission is, why not these cables be drafted from the Madras City to the villages for supplying the villagers with electricity and electrical connections? Why should these things be given to the Madras City alone and not for rural areas? That is why I want that a Committee should go into this question as suggested by me in clause (c) of my resolution, they should consider the desirability of stopping the supply of electricity for purposes other than agriculture in order to expedite the Grow More Food campaign. Sir, I do want that the Hon. Minister for Food should also look into this matter and see that he gives top priority for the supply of electricity to villagers for the Grow More Food campaign instead of exclusively giving such supplies to the City of Madras.

"Sir, my hon. Friend, Mr. Govindacharyulu, the other day referred to the need for electricity in the coastal districts and said that for the last two years nothing has been done in the matter of the establishment of an electrical plant for the supply of electricity in the coastal villages. I want to know why nothing has been done for the last two years, during which the Congress Ministry has been in power. The Chief Engineer for Electricity seems to have been attending only to the needs of towns and cities. He does not know how many applications were received for electrical connections to the wells and he does not take any action to see that electricity is supplied for irrigation purposes. It is the tail and therefore it does not move. Therefore, I submit, Sir, that the Government have got to make up their minds as to what their policy is in regard to the supply of electricity to rural areas.

"My hon. Friend Sri Madhava Menon knows very well, as the Minister for Agriculture, that the central districts and non-delta areas are not at all being served by electricity and that for stepping up production, electricity is most important. In my opinion, both Agriculture and Electricity should be in charge of one Minister, because it is only then that the Minister for Agriculture, who knows the value of electricity for agriculture, would be in a position to devote more attention to the provision of electricity to rural areas. The Hon. Mr. Bhaktavatsalam should be in charge of both the subjects, Electricity and Agriculture. If electricity-irrigation is introduced in the non-delta areas, then no ryot will go with his plough on his shoulder and the bullocks before him and wait at the ration shop for hours together for get-

ting his rations. If he is given irrigation facilities through electricity, he will straightway go to his fields and cultivate the food-grains he needs. What is it he wants? If he has got a regular irrigation source or a well from which he could get all the water he wants, there will be no need for him to purchase his food-grains from the ration shops. Cannot we supply electricity to him? Several memorials have been sent by the villagers to the Hon. Minister for the supply of electricity, but the Minister now says that a press note will be issued on the subject. What is the necessity for a press note? Does not the Government know the stocks of material available? Cannot the Government get at the stocks? There have been several occasions previously when press notes should have been issued. No press note was issued then. The same question was raised in connection with the food debate, in connection with the supplementary demand and several questions have been put and interpellations made. No press note was then really coming forward dealing with this point. The Hon. Minister for Public Works, who is a central districts' man must know what difficulties people in the rural areas are feeling for want of electricity to carry on their agricultural operations. He should know how people in the Chittoor district are toiling all day long with their yettams and bullocks to draw out water from wells. He would have heard the songs which these people sing when they go forwards and backwards on their yettams. He should not be so complacent like the poet who enjoyed the sweet melody when he heard the solitary reaper going on reaping and singing 'God is in Heaven and all is right with the world.'

"Sir, people in the villages are saying, the Congress Government is there and we will get everything we want. But please make sure that they will come to know what you have been doing for the urban areas and how you are indifferent towards their own needs. I ask, why do you want to give everything to the urban areas. They have got light; they have got good roads; they have got flush-out latrines; they have got cinemas and so on. But the villagers have got nothing. You want to pile everything on the towns and the people living in towns. The people who seem to represent the villages are mere soap politicians. They have no powers to do anything themselves.

"Sir, it is most regrettable that this thing has been allowed to go on like this, even though we have got three Reddies in the Ministry and all of them are country-men and the one at the top is a man of the village. I appeal to them to go through this matter, not as a party question, but as a question deeply affecting the villages and the country-life and to see that something is done in this direction. It is high time that electricity should be supplied to them, and until at least the food crisis is averted, they should have all facilities for carrying on their agricultural operations. There should be no more postponement. It is high time that one Minister should be in charge of both Agriculture and Electricity.

Otherwise the villages will be left to starve. My hon. Friend the Minister for Public Works should take up all these departments and run them himself.

"Finally I urge, Sir, that the Government should give utmost consideration to this question and I hope it will receive the necessary attention which it requires."

SRI H. M. JAGANNATHAM :—"I second the resolution, Sir."

* THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—"Mr. President, I am very thankful to the hon. Member for the very forceful speech he has made about the need for electricity for agriculturists. It is indeed a very vital question for agriculturists and it is a matter for great satisfaction that people in the villages have become so electricity-minded that whenever you go in villages, you hear people asking for electric connections for wells and other irrigation sources and serious disappointments are expressed by them, if such connections are not given to them. There is no difference at all between the hon. Member and the Government regarding the objective of this Resolution. But I am really sorry that I am unable to accept the resolution moved by my hon. Friend. I can assure my hon. Friend that the Government are giving their utmost consideration and top priority to the needs of the agriculturists.

"It is indeed a pity that the questions referred to by my hon. Friend have not been answered so far. I remember to have approved a draft answer some time ago, but the question being very elaborate, regarding connections to wells all over the Presidency, it takes some time to prepare the answer. I have no doubt that all the questions put by the hon. Member will be answered very soon. I have also proposed to issue a press note on the subject, explaining the position regarding electric connections for agricultural purposes.

"My hon. Friend Mr. Narayanaswami Nayudu has now also raised the question which he did when he was speaking on the Supplementary Demand the other day, regarding the purchase of cables for the Madras Electricity System. As pointed out in that note, every month we require about 2,500 yards of cables in order to keep the system running and in order to avoid the city being steeped in darkness. I may also point out that the cables referred to in the Supplementary Demand were underground wires and they would not suit rural purposes. These cables cannot be transferred to rural areas. Regarding materials that are necessary for giving 3-15 p.m.
connections for agricultural purposes, we need electricity materials like wires, iron poles and so on, and we also need agricultural materials like plough sets, pipes, fittings, etc. We are purchasing these materials wherever they are available. We have been purchasing these from the military surplus and we have also been placing very large orders in foreign countries wherever they were found available; but it does take time to get these things. Even before

we place the orders, these things are being sold away in other countries. There is really a very serious shortage of these materials and that is our real hurdle. We are purchasing second-hand railway poles too; we are awaiting a large indent.

"Then again, in the matter of giving connections, there is the question of load and the capacity of the present service stations. We are strengthening the present service stations; we are constructing new sub-stations in order to increase the load. So far as the Circars area is concerned, we are anticipating the Machkund scheme and we have already taken steps to strengthen the Bezwada and Vizagapatam thermal stations. We propose to construct another in Nellore. It was no doubt true that the West Godavari scheme referred to by Mr. Govindacharyulu at the last meeting was stopped under the orders of the Advisers' Government in 1942, but we have taken it up again and we are extending the lines and we are connecting it with the Bezwada station. We are of course giving the utmost priority for agricultural purposes. I appreciate what my hon. Friend stated regarding the need for development of agriculture and also the need for encouraging the agriculturists to grow more food. But we cannot do it absolutely exclusively; industrial purposes cannot be ignored. Even domestic connections and street lightings cannot be altogether given up. After all, 150 street lights would be equal to one connection for a well. Even otherwise, there is the question of load and the question of distance. If we have only sufficient materials to take the line up to a certain distance, if there are small industries and if there are small villages to be lighted, we do give the supply. If we should excusively give supply for irrigation purposes only, there again the question of distance, the question of shortage of materials, etc., face us. That is how, consistent with this idea of priority that is shown in the matter of agricultural purposes, subject to the shortage of materials which we are trying to solve, we are extending connections for agricultural purposes to the largest extent possible. It is no doubt true it is not satisfactory; it is no doubt true that not only here but in every village, every taluk and every district, there is nothing but disappointment and people are anxious that they should have connections. When they see electricity has come within three miles of their village, they cannot understand why it should not be extended to their village; but our difficulty is one of materials, non-availability of materials. I can, however, assure my hon. Friend and this House that we are doing everything possible; we are giving the utmost drive possible in order to meet the demands of agriculturists and I do hope that before long, we shall be able to substantially improve the position. We have placed large orders and we expect to receive supply, and so, shortly I do expect that we shall be able to extend electricity substantially to the villages for agricultural purposes before long.

"Regarding the supply of oil engines and pumping sets, information about which my hon. Friend wanted, also as regards

the wells dug, these are things dealt with by various departments like Agriculture, Revenue, etc. As regards the pumping sets, there is the same difficulty of non-availability of materials. There are cases where even when the Electricity Department has given connections, the ryots are unable to use it because they are unable to get pumping sets. Even for pumping sets, we have to depend on other countries. We must make arrangements for making these things in our own country without having to depend on other countries, and we are examining that question. But now we have to depend on other countries and our stock is very small. Therefore, even when we have given connections, ryots are unable to take advantage of it and use it. Anyhow, the committee that is proposed by my hon. Friend is not going to give any help in the matter. We are considering the question of appointing a committee; but we have not decided whether it is to be a purely official committee or a purely non-official committee. We are examining the question of appointing a committee to consider certain questions and to look into the expeditious disposal of some of these things. Therefore, we would not like to commit ourselves to a committee such as the one proposed by my hon. Friend. I do not know whether my hon. Friend means a Provincial Committee; such a committee would cause further delay in the matter. If the committee goes into the whole question of giving connections in every village throughout the province, that would mean further delay. Possibly, he means a district committee. A committee which examines the question must have the whole picture about the availability of materials, about the capacity, about the load available, etc., before it. Therefore, a committee in each district will not solve the problem. Therefore, I once again assure my hon. Friend and this House that we are quite alive to the importance of electricity to our agriculturists and we are doing everything and we shall effect a further drive in the matter. I would, therefore, request my hon. Friend to withdraw this resolution in the light of the assurance given by me."

ABDUL LATIF FAROOKHI SAHIB BAHADUR :—" I would like to make one submission, Sir, that a time-limit should be fixed for speakers."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" There won't be any need."

SRI B. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU :—" The one thing I want is, not speeches, but facts; what is the stock on hand, how much of it have you given for irrigation, how much for electricity, how much for agriculture and so on. In spite of your driving, driving and driving, it may be that you have given this only for 10 or 15 or 20 acres. Let me know for how many acres have you given electricity and how much or to what extent electricity has been extended for other purposes, and why should you not extend it further. It is not a question of making speeches; it is a question of statesmanship. You are a statesman here. I want you to be one; you should say 'there is so much material on hand,

I have given so much to such and such a thing, and I cannot give more than that.' Take for instance the pumping sets. Mr. G. D. Nayudu is manufacturing pumping sets at Coimbatore and I understand he can supply any quantity you may want. Is this Government so impotent as not to be able to know how much they require; and don't they have steel; and if they don't have it, can't they manage to get it and can't they get Mr. G. D. Nayudu to manufacture for them? There are other works also in the province like the co-operative works; can't you give orders for making pumping sets. If I feel hungry, am I to tell my stomach: 'Well, Sir, I am unable to get food; please wait, I shall earn something'; and will the stomach keep quiet?"

MR. PRESIDENT :—" What more do you want from the Minister?"

SRI B. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU :—" Why issue a press note? You are in charge of electricity and you must know what is the demand, and what is the actual stock on hand."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" You want all that information?"

SRI B. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU :—" If he had given that information, I would say alright."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" Put a question and he will give you the information."

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" That would be a very long press-note, and I cannot give all the facts off-hand."

SRI B. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU :—" If this committee is appointed, it will to-morrow call the Chief Engineer for Irrigation and ask him to give all the information. It will sit for two hours or three hours tomorrow itself and get the necessary information. And when one thing is disposed of, it will say, alright, what about other things. In this way, as regards pumping sets, the question will be asked 'why should you not have them made here; which are the firms that will make them; why not place our orders with them.' Surely, all that is not going to take long; for doing all that, does it require a long debate like this? Mr. Muthuranga Mudaliyar and Mr. Bhima Rao, if they are given the materials, would examine the whole question very soon and finish the whole thing in a couple of days or three days. It is not a question of a long-range policy as you call it. What has the Machkund project got to do with this; the Machkund project has nothing to do with this; it will come only in the next generation when you and I may not be there (laughter). The real question is: the monsoon has failed; your own district is affected. Chittoor is affected and North Arcot is going to be affected by it."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" Why 'going to be'? It is already affected."

Sri B. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU :—" Are you not going to give them something at least now? You want more food for people to eat. Some time hence you may have the Tungabhadra Project, but what is the use? That is not the question. The real question is : what are the stocks on your hand; can you not manufacture pumping sets within three months from now and give them to the ryots? Is it a very difficult problem? Is it so difficult for this National Government to do? It is easy to go to the jail, but when you come out of the jail, you must be prepared to have these things manufactured and give them to the ryots. Do not rest upon your laurels; those laurels are already gone. I therefore submit that this committee may be left to do everything necessary for quick relief to the people."

Mr. PRESIDENT :—" I think the hon. Member may give us an indication of his mind."

Sri B. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU :—" The indication of my mind is this."

Mr. PRESIDENT :—" No more speeches; will you withdraw the resolution?"

Sri B. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU :—" No more withdrawal; let me have the facts; the Minister is there on the other side; it is not a question of my withdrawing it; there is the public awaiting a decision on this question."

The Hon. Sri M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I have already stated that we shall issue a press note explaining the whole position including the information called for by my friend. It would be a very long press note, and it is not possible to read it here. It would take at least an hour and more; that is why I said I shall issue a press note. I also invite my hon. Friend to be with me to-morrow at 12 o'clock when the Chief Engineer for Electricity will be here for a discussion. He would then understand the position and we can have a discussion; not only my hon. Friend who has moved the resolution but any other hon. Member is welcome to come and have a discussion. We shall do all that is possible."

Mr. PRESIDENT :—" Is it tomorrow? Why not the day-after-to-morrow? I shall also join."

The Hon. Sri M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I shall not be here, Sir. Therefore, I once again request my hon. Friend to withdraw this resolution."

Sri B. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU :—" In view of the assurance given that we meet to-morrow, I have no objection to withdraw the resolution."

Mr. PRESIDENT :—" We will meet between 1-30 and 2-30 p.m."

The resolution was, by leave of the House, withdrawn.